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# THE IMPACT OF ADVERTISING INFLUENCE, BRAND PERCEPTION, AND TRUST IN ADVERTISING ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISIONS

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## Abstract

Advertising has remained a significant influence on consumer behaviour. However, the power of advertising in purchase decisions has varied in emerging markets due to credibility and trust issues among consumers. This study examines the influence of advertising, brand perception and advertisement trust on consumer purchase decisions in Pakistan. A quantitative design was employed, and a structured online questionnaire was used to collect data from 300 respondents. Demographic factors, such as age, gender, education, and occupation, were incorporated to ensure diversity. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis, and reliability analysis ensured that the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha> 0.80) was strong. The findings indicated that the influence of advertisements ($\beta = 0.342$, $p <.001$), brand perception ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$), and trust in advertisements ($\beta = 0.176$, $p < 0.01$) were significant predictors of purchase decision making, which explained 46.4% variance ($R^2 = 0.464$). The findings show that credibility and favourable brand image are crucial in maximising advertising efficiency. The study proposes that companies implement clear, branding, and morally responsible marketing campaigns to develop trust and keep the consumers loyal.

**Keywords:** Advertising Influence, Brand Perception, Trust in Advertisement, Consumer Behaviour, Purchase Decision.

## Introduction

In the hyper-connected market we live in, advertising has become a significant influence on how consumers make choices and make purchasing decisions. In addition to generating product awareness, advertising currently serves as a form of persuasion that can change attitudes, lifestyle, and even cultural patterns. Researchers posit that advertising not only creates awareness but also convinces people to attach symbolic meanings to commodities, such as identity, social status, and aspirations (Belch & Belch, 2021). Digital platforms have expanded, and advertising has shifted from traditional offline media (television, print, and radio) to online, interactive digital environments, including social media, influencer campaigns, and programmatic advertising (Kapoor et al., 2021).

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The nature of the interplay between advertising and consumer behaviour is particularly pronounced in emerging economies like Pakistan, where a rise in internet penetration and the use of social networking platforms has intensified consumers' exposure to promotional messages (Hassan et al., 2023). It is demonstrated that although advertisements have a substantial influence on brand recall, purchase intentions, and loyalty, a high exposure level can lead to scepticism and ad fatigue (De Veirman et al., 2022). It is this two-fold effect that encourages one to consider how various advertising strategies are at work in influencing consumers to make decisions, especially within demographic lines such as age, gender, and education, among others.

## Rationale

This study has its logic because advertising has increasingly affected contemporary consumption habits. Although enterprises have become significant investors in advertising campaigns, their results can often be unpredictable, as consumers' responses to these ads vary due to the impact of multiple cultural, psychological, and social influences (Kotler et al., 2022). With Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok being the most popular social media used there, the communication between consumers and brands has been reshaped, where young generations prove to be more responsive to online advertising than older groups (Ahmad & Sherwani, 2022). Nonetheless, distrust of advertising is a significant issue, as deceptive or exaggerated statements can erode customer confidence and tarnish brand image (Islam et al., 2021).

It has thus been necessary to gather empirical evidence on the influence of advertisements on consumer attitudes and purchasing behaviour. It will also assist advertisers in understanding the advertising appeal, in a similar manner to the informative, emotional, or promotional appeal that consumers respond to, thereby leading to more effective and ethical marketing practices.

## Problem Statement

Although advertising is considered a potent factor in influencing consumer behaviour, its role in buying choices is sporadic and situational. In Pakistan, advertisers spend a significant amount on both traditional and digital media; however, consumers often lack trust in the ads, as they are suspicious that they may be false, exaggerated, or manipulated (Ali et al., 2020). While there are studies that agree on the real-world effect of advertising production, which is to add brand awareness and purchase intent, there are others that clarify the negative impact of over-advertising or misleading advertising, which in turn prompts consumer doubt and unfavourable brand displays (De Keyzer et al., 2023).

## Research Questions

1. How far does the acquisition of advertisements influence purchaser choices?
2. What is the role of brand perception in consumer buying behaviour?
3. How does trust in advertisements influence the decisions of consumers towards buying?

## Research Objectives

- To examine the effect of advertising on consumers' purchase decisions.
- To determine the influence of brand perception on consumer purchase behaviour.
- To assess the impact of trust in advertisements on consumer purchase decisions.

## Theoretical Framework

An efficient theoretical framework is required to clarify the impact that advertising has on consumer behaviour, and the present study relies on the credibly established theories of marketing, psychology, and communication. The Hierarchy of Effects Model (Lavidge & Steiner, 1961) provides a framework for assessing the impact of advertising on consumers in a specific order, beginning with awareness and information formation, progressing to attitudes, and ultimately to purchase intention, which is, however, closely applicable in a post-digital context (Barry, 2020). Likewise, the AIDA Model focuses on the persuasive path of attention-action, which recent studies confirm to be especially relevant when it comes to social media advertising, where capturing attention quickly is paramount (Wijaya et al., 2022). This work is also supported by the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which highlight how attitudes and perceived social expectations, influenced by advertising messages and endorsements, are converted into behavioural intentions (Ajzen, 2020). In the context of communication, Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) explains why consumers differ in their responses to advertisements, depending on their motivation to be entertained, obtain information, or communicate with others (Whiting & Williams, 2020). Finally, there is the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), in which persuasion is achieved either by the main mechanisms (the central routes) of the argument, e.g., rational thinking, or by the peripheral routes (emotional appeal and aesthetic) that are essential when considering the diverse influence of advertising (Feng & Xie, 2022). Together, the theories provide a solid conceptual basis for discussing the role of advertising in establishing consumer trust, brand perception, and buying behaviour in the new Pakistani marketplace.

## Conceptual Framework

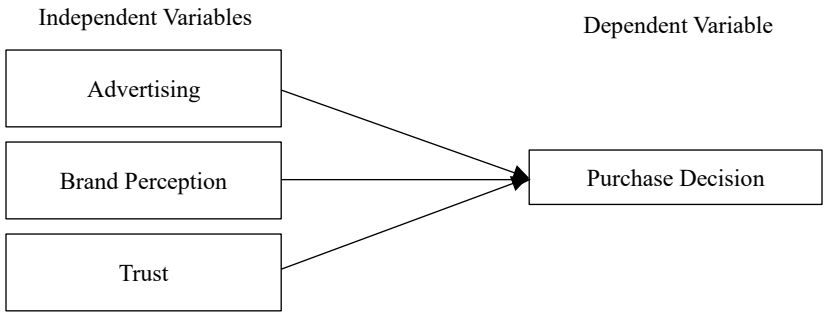



**Figure 01: Research Framework**

## Study Hypotheses

$H_1$: Advertising influences purchase decisions significantly.

$H_2$: Brand perception has a significant influence on purchase decisions.

$H_3$: Trust in an advertisement has a significant impact on purchase decisions.

## Significance of the Study

The work is a contribution to the academic literature and the practical aspect of marketing. In terms of scholarly contribution, it is an addition to the body of knowledge on consumer behaviour, as it provides empirical validation of the direct effect of advertising, brand perception, and trust on the purchase decision-making process in an emerging market setting. Previous studies have primarily focused on established economies, whereas this one emphasises the dynamics of consumers in Pakistan (Ahmed & Sherwani, 2022).

In a practical sense, the research holds great significance for marketers, advertisers, and brand managers. Optimising advertising with improved effectiveness and success over consumers' demands, defining credibility, transparency, and brand-building that help firms to make the advertising and production planning strategies work better. The research also raises concerns about poor moves towards ethical advertising, which may not meet the interests of consumers. Altogether, the results highlight the importance of advertising as a strategic tool to foster consumer interaction, influence buying behaviour, and drive long-term business growth.

## Literature Review

With the advent of new media, the need to maximise this medium as a promotional tool arose, leading to the emergence of new advertising strategies alongside changes in consumer behaviour in the 20th century and the art of persuasion in the 21st century. Advertising and Consumer Behaviour: With the introduction of new media and the need to maximise their use as a promotional tool, new advertising styles and consumer behaviour emerged in the 20th century, and the art of persuasion in the 21st century was developed.

An advertisement is a crucial tool for influencing consumer decision-making, serving both as a source of information and a means of persuasion. Conventionally, it has been employed to create awareness, feature product benefits, and differentiate a brand in competitive markets. Nevertheless, in the contemporary online world, communication goes beyond awareness and attitudes, perceptions and long-term commitment. (Belch & Belch, 2021). It has been suggested that effective advertising will undoubtedly enhance brand recall, emotional engagement, and ultimately increase purchasing intentions (Ahmed & Sherwani, 2022).

## Online Advertising and Influential Social Media

Leveraging the advent of social networking sites, advertising has become increasingly interactive and information-intensive. The use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc.) has changed consumer behaviour toward any brand, allowing

them to receive real-time and personalised promotional content. Research shows that interactive digital platform advertisements generate a high degree of engagement compared to traditional media, as users can participate in likes, shares, and comments (De Veirman et al., 2022). The level of influence of social media advertising on SMA is especially strong among younger groups in Pakistan, as younger consumers are more inclined towards influencer campaigns and promotion of interactions (Hassan et al., 2023).

**Psychology of Consumers and Advertising Appeals**

Consumer responses mainly depend on the nature of an appealing advertisement. Informational appeals refer to rational appeals, i.e., those based on price and quality, whereas emotional appeals refer to social identity, happiness, or prestige. Promotional messages, such as discounts and offers, have a direct appeal to consumer sensitivity to prices. Research shows that emotional appeals are more effective in establishing a strong association with brands. In contrast, promotional appeals trigger a more immediate purchase within a narrower range of potential changes (Wijaya et al., 2022). That said, too much reliance on celebrity endorsements has not been entirely successful, as consumers tend to perceive it as unrealistic (De Keyzer et al., 2023).

**Advertising Trust, Credibility and Scepticism**

Consumer trust plays a critical mediating role in advertising and purchasing decisions. Whereas believable advertisements reinforce brand loyalty and encourage people to buy products again, false or exaggerated statements tend to make individuals sceptical (Islam et al., 2021). As revealed by recent studies, customers are now increasingly attentive to authenticity and transparency, and they become hesitant to consume promotional messages that seem forced or manipulated (Chen & Xie, 2023). The validity of advertising is therefore a prerequisite for its efficacy, especially in the inherent economies, where concerns about counterfeit products and their portrayal are rife (Ali et al., 2020).

**Effects on the usefulness of Advertising**

The consumer's reaction to advertising primarily depends on demographic factors. Digital and influencer marketing are more likely to reach younger buyers, whereas older populations tend to be more inclined to trust traditional advertising methods, such as television and print (Kapoor et al., 2021). One can also notice gender disparities, as the authors suggest that women are more important to advertising in categories such as cosmetics, fashion, and household products, primarily because they are the central figures in household product consumption (Shahid et al., 2022). Consumer attitudes are also moderated by educational background, with highly educated people being more sceptical of advertisement claims and those that are informative.

Ethnocide is claimed to be a factor in the survival and progression of advertising, as people cannot foresee the potentially disastrous consequences of advertising without examining the related issues and ethical aspects (Croteau, 1996).

Advertising ethics remain a significant concern. Researchers also claim that advertising that is either manipulative or overly persuasive could promote materialism, unrealistic expectations, and excessive consumption (Hassan et al., 2022). The existence of misleading health-related or beauty advertisements, especially, has been proven to negatively affect the well-being of consumers (Chen & Xie, 2023). This is why the focus on socially responsible and sustainable advertising is increasing, and nowadays, honesty, authenticity, and cultural sensitivity are valued (Kotler et al., 2022).

Correspondingly, the analysed studies also show that advertising has a huge impact on consumer behaviour through the determination of awareness, attitudes, and purchase choice. However, it is demographically moderated and consumer trust-mediated, as its effectiveness varies based on these factors. Emotional and online advertising techniques are effective in the short run, but credibility is necessary to foster long-term consumer loyalty. A similar gap is also indicated by the existing literature in emerging economies, such as Pakistan, where digital advertising is expected to experience significant growth. Still, it raises concerns about authenticity and ethical practices. This disconnect highlights the need for research that is tailored to the local context to assess the impact of advertising strategies on consumer decision-making in specific markets.

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

In this research study, the research design used was quantitative. A quantitative approach was employed as the method, due to its ability to identify and determine relationships between variables, as well as test hypotheses using statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The design is cross-sectional, meaning the data were gathered at a single instance in time to provide a snapshot of consumer perceptions towards advertising and its influence on purchase decisions.

### Population and Sample

The sample population for this analysis consisted of consumers in Pakistan aged 18 years and above who receive advertising on both traditional and digital media. This was selected because it is the most active population, one that constantly interacts with advertisements and makes purchasing decisions on a regular basis.

The snowball sampling tool was used to select a sample of 300 respondents, as it is suitable for identifying potential participants who may be active users on social and digital platforms. Such an approach is prevalent in marketing research and consumer behaviour when personal and professional address books are used to recruit the participants (Etikan & Bala, 2019). The sample was varied to include respondents from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, gender, education, and occupation, thereby capturing a range of different perspectives.

## Data Collection Method

This study employed a structured questionnaire sent via digital platforms (WhatsApp, Facebook, and email) to collect information related to the case study. The questionnaire was made into two broad sections. The former section collected demographic background information, which included age, gender, education, and occupation, to provide a portrait of the respondents. The second part focused on the key study variables, including the influence of advertising, brand perception, trust in advertisements, and the purchase decision. All these constructs were assessed based on the number of items adopted and refined following prior validated research. The questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). The Likert scale was chosen because it is generally recognised as a powerful instrument for representing consumer attitudes and perceptions in behavioural studies, and it has reliability and interpretability (Joshi et al., 2015; Allen & Seaman, 2022). This method was important to ensure that the data gathered was organised as well as being statistically analysable.

## Variables and Measurement

The study employed both dependent and independent variables, measured by a construct that had been well-established in previous studies. The purchase decision was the dependent variable (DV), measured using items that depicted consumer intention and actual purchasing behaviour. The independent variables (IVs) were three-dimensional categories, namely the advertising influence, quantified by such indicators as advertising exposure, exposure frequency, and persuasion of advertisements; brand perception, evaluated according to such indicators as perceived quality of advertisement, brand credibility, and brand authenticity and believability; and trust to advertisement, assessed in terms of perceived brand credibility, brand honesty, and brand authenticity and credibility. The scale items were all previously represented and modified in the empirical research fields of advertising and consumer behaviour, enhancing validity and reliability (Islam et al., 2021; Chen & Xie, 2023). The methodology presented a solid foundation for accurately studying the correlations between advertising-relevant factors and consumer purchase decisions.

## Reliability and Validity

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for each construct to determine the reliability of the scale. It was accepted that a coefficient of 0.70 or higher would be acceptable as recommended in behavioural studies (Taber, 2018). The expertise review of the questionnaire and pilot test with 30 respondents ensured validity, as the latter demonstrated that all items were clear, relevant, and included in accordance with the study's objectives.

## Data Analysis

Statistical analysis of the data was performed using SPSS (Version 25) to ensure accuracy and rigour in the statistical interpretation. The analysis was initiated using descriptive statistics, which were employed to summarise the demographic characteristics of the respondents and to present a general picture of the distribution of the study variables. A reliability analysis, based on Cronbach's Alpha, was conducted

to determine the reliability of the measurement scales, ensuring that the measured constructs used in defining them were reliable and consistent. Lastly, regression analysis was used not only to test the study's hypotheses but also to estimate the predictive value of the independent variables—namely, advertising influence, brand perception, and trust—against the dependent variable of the purchase decision. The most suitable method chosen is regression, as it is commonly known to determine the degree of strength and direction of the relationship among variables, while also calculating the percentage of variance of a variable explained by the predictors (Hair et al., 2022). The methodology provided a solid statistical basis on which to test the research model.

## Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards. Respondents are free participants, and the purpose of the research was disclosed to them prior to their filling out the questionnaire. The research was conducted with anonymity and confidentiality in mind, and no personal identifiers were collected. The respondents were also free to leave the study at any point without punishment, which is in accordance with the ethical standards in conducting research studies involving human subjects (Resnik, 2020).

## Analyses and Interpretations

**Table 01: Demographics Analysis**

| Variable | Category | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Age Group | 18–25 | 34.6% |
| | 26–35 | 47.4% |
| | 36–45 | 14.6% |
| | 46 and above | 3.4% |
| Gender | Male | 62.5% |
| | Female | 37.5% |
| Education | Intermediate or below | 25.4% |
| | Bachelor | 36.4% |
| | Master's or above | 38.2% |

Table 01 presents the demographic profile of respondents. Most participants fell within the 26–35 age group (47.4%), followed by those aged 18–25 years (34.6%). Smaller proportions were aged 36–45 years (14.6%) and 46 years and above (3.4%). This indicates that most respondents were young adults, reflecting the segment most actively exposed to advertising. In terms of gender, males accounted for 62.5% of the sample, while females represented 37.5%, suggesting a male-dominated response base. Regarding education, the largest group held a master’s degree or above (38.2%), followed closely by those with a bachelor’s degree (36.4%), while 25.4% had Intermediate or lower qualifications. This demonstrates that the sample was generally well-educated, which is relevant as education level may influence perceptions of advertising and brand trust.

| Table 02: Reliability of Scale (Advertising Influence Items) | |
|---|---|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| 0.873 | 12 |

Table 02 shows the reliability analysis for the advertising influence items. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.873 for 12 items indicates a high level of internal consistency. According to Taber (2018), an alpha value above 0.70 is considered acceptable, while values above 0.80 demonstrate good reliability. Therefore, the measurement scale used in this study is highly reliable for assessing the influence of advertising.

| Table 03: Model Summary | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | $R^2$ | Adjusted $R^2$ | Std. Error |
| 1 | 0.681 | 0.464 | 0.459 | 0.512 |

Table 03 provides a regression model summary. The correlation coefficient (R = 0.681) indicates a strong positive relationship between the independent variables (advertising influence, brand perception, and trust in advertisement) and the dependent variable (purchase decision). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.464$) indicates that the model accounts for 46.4% of the variance in purchase decisions. The adjusted $R^2$ (0.459) further confirms the robustness of the model, while the standard error of 0.512 suggests a moderate level of unexplained variance.

| Table 04: Coefficients of Regression | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Predictor | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
| (Constant) | 1.214 | 0.214 | – | 5.67 | 0.000 |
| Advertising Influence | 0.342 | 0.058 | 0.421 | 5.90 | 0.000 |
| Brand Perception | 0.298 | 0.067 | 0.334 | 4.45 | 0.000 |
| Trust in Advertisement | 0.176 | 0.051 | 0.215 | 3.45 | 0.001 |

Table 04 presents the regression coefficients. All three predictors make significant contributions to purchase decisions. Advertising influence ($B = 0.342$, $p < 0.001$) had the strongest effect, indicating that greater exposure to advertising directly increases the likelihood of purchase. Brand perception ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$) also showed a significant positive effect, indicating that a positive brand image and reputation have a substantial influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Finally, trust in advertisement ($\beta = 0.176$, $p = 0.001$), though relatively weaker than the other predictors, still had a meaningful impact on purchase decisions. Collectively, these findings confirm that advertising effectiveness is enhanced not only by exposure but also by consumer trust and favourable brand perception.

## Discussion

### $H_1$: Advertising influences purchase decisions significantly.

The theoretical results of this paper demonstrate that advertising influence plays a significant role in determining consumer purchasing behaviour. This finding corroborates similar earlier studies, which have shown that advertisements form a good

motivator of consumer purchasing behaviour, especially under digital and social media. Wijaya et al. (2022) propose that advertising attracts attention and generates a desire, which ultimately results in a purchase act. Similarly, Hassan et al. (2023) noted that millennials in Pakistan are highly sensitive to advertising campaigns on social media websites, which exert a strong influence on their purchasing decisions. The results of the present work support these findings, which indicate that regular active advertising exposure not only enhances awareness but also prompts actual purchase decisions. This implies that advertising will still be an important tool for the company to influence consumer behaviour, particularly in competitive markets.

**$H_2$: Brand perception has a significant influence on purchase decisions.**

Regression outputs also reveal that brand perception is the primary factor influencing a purchase decision. This aligns with previous research, which highlights the impact of brand image and credibility on consumer preferences. Chen and Xie (2023) have highlighted that the positive brand perception boosts consumer trust and loyalty, thus leading to repeat purchasing behaviour. Similarly, Shahid et al. (2022) also found that brand reputation plays a major role in consumer purchasing behaviour in South Asian markets. In this experiment, it was observed that whenever the brand was perceived as reputable, trusted, and aligned with the self-image, consumers were more likely to make a purchase. It means that, in addition to exposure to commercials, consumer perception of a brand's quality, reputation, and values is the defining factor that contributes to consumers making their purchasing decisions.

**$H_3$: Trust in an advertisement has a significant impact on purchase decisions.**

The discussion also indicates that the trust in advertisements well predicts purchase. This observation confirms previous studies that indicate a direct proportionality between a consumer's belief in advertising credibility and their readiness to purchase features (Islam et al., 2021). When advertisements are perceived as truthful and open, they boost consumer confidence and reduce suspicion. De Keyzer et al. (2023) validated that personalised and sincere advertising messages increase consumer trust and positively influence purchase behaviour. On the same note, Chen and Xie (2023) held the view that consumer-brand relations are enhanced through transparency in advertising content. The current paper notes that trust is not only an auxiliary but an essential indicator of translating provisions of advertising exposure into real purchase behaviours. In highly sceptical advertising markets, credibility is essential for the long-term effectiveness of advertising messages.

Overall, the findings support the claims that the influence of advertisements, brand perception, and confidence in advertisements can all be used transparently as predictors of purchasing behaviour. Such results can be reconciled with international and local literature, indicating that, although advertising may be effective in attracting consumer attention, its impact is more pronounced in cases where the advertising is reinforced by strong brand recognition and credible messages. Generating genuine, open, and branding advertising to boost consumer confidence and influence buying decisions is a priority for businesses in developing economies such as Pakistan.

## Conclusion

The research results of this investigation indicate that the influence and perception of advertisements, as well as trust in advertisements, are key predictors of consumer buying behaviour. These findings affirm that advertising remains a critical factor in influencing consumer behaviour through creating brand associations, increasing consumer awareness, and shaping the desire to purchase a product. This confirms the perspective that advertising can be an effective marketing tool, especially when executed in a digital format, through which interactivity and personalisation affect its effectiveness (De Veirman et al., 2022).

Brand perception emerged as a significant factor, as it can substantially influence a purchase decision. Additionally, credibility and a desirable brand image were relevant factors in shaping consumer loyalty. Additionally, brand confidence had a significant impact on the intention to purchase, validating the fact that sales are impossible without the credibility and authenticity of advertisements (Chen & Xie, 2023). The paper highlights that, in totality, although advertising exposure dictates the nature of consumer behaviour, the actual effectiveness of advertising is based on the level of trustworthiness and positivity associated with the brand.

## Recommendations

### Emphasise the importance of Credibility and Transparency.

Authenticity and misleading statements should be the major concerns for advertisers. It has been confirmed that transparent advertising goes a long way towards increasing consumer trust and fostering a longer-term relationship with a brand (De Keyzer et al., 2023).

### Strengthen Brand Image

Given that the perception of a brand is a key determinant of purchasing behaviour, companies should invest in brand-building models that emphasise quality, reliability, and cultural specificity (Shahid et al., 2022).

### Leverage Digital Platforms

Advertising through social media is very marketable among young consumers. There is a growing consensus that companies need to use more interactive and personalised campaigns to increase engagement (Hassan et al., 2023).

### Be Balanced, Emotional, and Informative Appeals.

Where emotional appeals capture people's attention, informative advertisements help them make rational choices. It is recommended to strike a balance between the two to achieve sustainable consumer loyalty (Wijaya et al., 2022).

**Implementation of Ethical Advertising.**

Marketers are advised to avoid making advertising materialistic or unrealistic. Areas have been demonstrated as being harmonised through ethical advertising, which promotes brand reputation and consumer health (Hassan et al., 2022).

## Limitations

This research, as with any other empirical study, has limitations. To start with, the research was conducted on a sample of 300 Pakistani respondents; hence, there is no guarantee that the research study can be generalised to other regions and cultural contexts. Second, this cross-sectional design involves consumer perceptions of tastes and does not render changes in attitude over time. Third, the research relied on self-reports, which are also prone to social desirability bias. Finally, the researchers had restricted the research to just three variables of interest making adoption of advertisements influence, brand perception, and trusts as the only independent of interest, leaving out other factors that could guess the purchase decisions like pricing sensitivity and influence by peers and quality of the product may also contribute to purchase decisions. Future studies can overcome these limitations by employing a longitudinal design, incorporating larger cross-cultural samples, and including more variables.

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